

soundness. Besides, the Stock Exchange is an instrument for ensuring the facility and honourable conduct of bargains: it is in no sense a court of judgment upon credit.<sup>1</sup>

The value of an authorised list of this kind cannot well be over-estimated in the interests of the public, for the prices there quoted enable an investor to compare the price at which he has recently bought or sold, and thus within reasonable limits (since prices are always in process of variation) perceive that he has obtained the current market value. He can also at once himself discover—without the delay and precariousness of vagrant inquiries, which may for various reasons be delusive or misleading—the price he is likely to realise or be required to pay.

Without describing each column in the list we note that one column is headed "Interest due," that is, the dates when the interest upon any particular stock becomes payable in the year. The succeeding column bears the important title "When x d or x in." This, on account of its apparent difficulty and significance to the investor, will be explained at sufficient length at a later stage. The rate of interest, when the rate is a fixed percentage, or the last rate of dividend (when the return is of the nature of dividend and, therefore, sometimes variable) of the security follows; then a column entitled "Quotations," and finally a column of "Business done." The column of "quotations" (being the prices prevailing at the close of business, and hence usually termed "Closing quotations")—expressed, for example, as 70-70<sup>^</sup>—are not authoritative, that is to say, they are not the statements of the responsible officials of the House. They are simply valuations; the publisher of

the list here inserts merely the values of  
the several stocks  
and shares at such amounts as the  
dealers in the different  
markets advise him to be fair estimates  
at the close of the  
day. In respect of securities which  
constantly or frequently  
form the subjects of purchase and sale,  
these quotations may  
be accepted as trustworthy indications  
of the actual values;  
but where dealings are not numerous  
in any security the  
closing quotation expresses only an  
expert's judgment upon

<sup>1</sup> The rule of the Stock Exchange simply states that the committee may order the quotation in the list of any security of "sufficient magnitude and importance,"